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County Employment and Wages in Nebraska — Fourth Quarter 2018

The two largest counties in Nebraska had employment gains from December 2017 to December 2018, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with 2017 annual average employment levels of 75,000 or more.) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Charlene Peiffer noted that employment rose 0.5 percent in Lancaster County and 0.3 percent in Douglas County. (See [table 1.](#))

Nationally, employment advanced 1.5 percent from December 2017 to December 2018 with 296 of the 349 largest U.S. counties registering increases. Midland, TX, had the largest percentage increase in the country, up 10.0 percent over the year. Bay, FL, experienced the largest over-the-year percentage decrease in employment, with a loss of 5.6 percent.

Among the two largest counties in Nebraska, employment was higher in Douglas (342,800) in December 2018. Lancaster County had an employment level of 172,400. Collectively, Nebraska's two large counties accounted for 52.4 percent of the state's employment. Nationwide, the 349 largest counties made up 73.2 percent of total U.S. employment.

The average weekly wage in Douglas County was \$1,039 in the fourth quarter of 2018, an increase of 3.0 percent from the fourth quarter of 2017. (See [table 1.](#)) Average weekly wages in Lancaster were \$904, up 2.6 percent over the year. Nationally, the average weekly wage rose 3.2 percent over the year, increasing to \$1,144 in the fourth quarter of 2018.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 91 counties in Nebraska with employment levels below 75,000. Two of these smaller counties had average weekly wages above the national average. (See [table 2.](#))

Large county wage changes

As noted, average weekly wages in Douglas County increased 3.0 percent, ranking it 176th among the nation's 349 largest counties. Lancaster County's average wages rose 2.6 percent over the year and ranked 210th nationwide. (See [table 1.](#))

Nationally, 332 of the 349 largest counties had over-the-year wage growth. Tippecanoe, IN, had the largest fourth-quarter over-the-year wage gain at 15.1 percent. Williamson, TN, was second with a wage increase of 13.1 percent, followed by Olmsted, MN, at 13.0 percent.

Among the largest U.S. counties, 15 experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. Washington, PA, had the largest percentage decrease in average weekly wages (-6.6 percent), followed by Elkhart, IN (-5.0 percent); Muscogee, GA, (-3.7 percent); and Douglas, CO (-3.6 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

Douglas County's \$1,039 average weekly wage placed near the middle of the national ranking at 167th in the fourth quarter of 2018. Lancaster County's average weekly wage of \$904 ranked 291st among the nation's largest counties.

Nationally, weekly wages were higher than the U.S. average of \$1,144 in 94 of the 349 largest counties. Santa Clara, CA, held the top position among the highest-paid large counties in the nation with an average weekly wage of \$2,670. San Francisco, CA, was second at \$2,452, followed by San Mateo, CA, (\$2,410); New York, NY, (\$2,400); and Suffolk, MA (\$2,055).

Among the largest U.S. counties, 255 had weekly wages below the national average in the fourth quarter of 2018. Hidalgo, TX, had the lowest wage at \$680, followed by Horry, SC, and Cameron, TX, each at \$685.

Average weekly wages in Nebraska's smaller counties

Among the counties with employment below 75,000, Stanton (\$1,330) and Washington (\$1,168) had average weekly wages above the national average of \$1,144. Loup County had the lowest weekly wage in the state, averaging \$479 in the fourth quarter of 2018. (See [table 2](#).)

When all 93 counties in Nebraska were considered, 5 had average weekly wages less than \$600, 22 had wages from \$600 to \$699, 40 had wages from \$700 to \$799, and 26 had wages of \$800 or more. (See [chart 1](#).)

Additional statistics and other information

QCEW data for states have been included in this release in [table 3](#). For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the [Technical Note](#) or visit www.bls.gov/cew.

Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2017 edition of this publication, which was published in September 2018, contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2018 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2017* are now available online at www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn17.htm. The 2018 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2019.

The County Employment and Wages release for first quarter 2019 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, August 21, 2019. The County Employment and Wages full data update for first quarter 2019 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, September 4, 2019.

BLS Local Data App Now Available for Android Devices

The BLS Local Data app, first released for iPhones last fall, is now available for Android devices. Search using your current location, a zip code, or a location name to find employment and wage data for detailed industries and occupations. BLS continues to partner with the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of the Chief Information Officer to expand the features and data in the app. For more information please visit: <https://beta.bls.gov/labs/blogs/2019/04/17/bls-local-data-app-now-available-for-android-devices/>.

Technical Note

Average weekly wage data by county are compiled under the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, also known as the ES-202 program. The data are derived from summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) legislation and provided by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing quarterly total wages by the average of the three monthly employment levels of those covered by UI programs. 13, the number of weeks in a quarter, then divide the result. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or states for reasons other than changes in the average wage level. Data for all states, Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), counties, and the nation are available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cew; however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised and may not match the data contained on the Bureau's Web site.

QCEW data are not designed as a time series. QCEW data are simply the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. Establishments can move in or out of a county or industry for a number of reasons—some reflecting economic events, others reflecting administrative changes.

The preliminary QCEW data presented in this release may differ from data released by the individual states as well as from the data presented on the BLS Web site. These potential differences result from the states' continuing receipt, review and editing of UI data over time. On the other hand, differences between data in this release and the data found on the BLS Web site are the result of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons. Specifically, these adjustments account for administrative (noneconomic) changes such as a correction to a previously reported location or industry classification. Adjusting for these administrative changes allows users to more accurately assess changes of an economic nature (such as a firm moving from one county to another or changing its primary economic activity) over a 12-month period. Currently, adjusted data are available only from BLS press releases.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 2 largest counties in Nebraska, fourth quarter 2018

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2018 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2017-18 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, fourth quarter 2017-18 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	148,061.8	1.5	--	\$1,144	--	3.2	--
Nebraska	983.0	0.2	--	930	40	3.2	30
Douglas, Neb.....	342.8	0.3	258	1,039	167	3.0	176
Lancaster, Neb.	172.4	0.5	242	904	291	2.6	210

Footnotes:

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

(3) Ranking does not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Nebraska, fourth quarter 2018

Area	Employment December 2018	Average weekly wage(1)
United States(2)	148,061,773	\$1,144
Nebraska	982,981	930
Adams	15,074	812
Antelope	2,091	758
Arthur	86	573
Banner	111	757
Blaine	131	673
Boone	2,424	780
Box Butte	3,768	726
Boyd	574	594
Brown	1,222	733
Buffalo	27,432	798
Burt	1,764	751
Butler	2,581	778
Cass	5,774	763
Cedar	2,654	749
Chase	1,950	781
Cherry	2,239	619
Cheyenne	4,365	824
Clay	2,321	909
Colfax	5,168	893
Cuming	3,651	846
Custer	4,511	778
Dakota	12,652	945
Dawes	3,041	659
Dawson	11,525	808
Deuel	513	642
Dixon	1,653	781
Dodge	17,338	823
Douglas	342,763	1,039
Dundy	566	786
Fillmore	2,194	826
Franklin	720	724
Frontier	863	687
Furnas	1,978	744
Gage	8,973	747
Garden	543	636
Garfield	830	672
Gosper	378	798
Grant	292	664
Greeley	620	679
Hall	34,756	813
Hamilton	3,618	908
Harlan	820	663
Hayes	208	631
Hitchcock	660	720
Holt	4,490	747
Hooker	279	518
Howard	1,590	697
Jefferson	3,389	702
Johnson	1,547	767
Kearney	2,242	791
Keith	3,163	710
Keya Paha	149	568
Kimball	1,446	743
Knox	2,915	685

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Nebraska, fourth quarter 2018 - Continued

Area	Employment December 2018	Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾
Lancaster.....	172,364	904
Lincoln.....	14,366	790
Logan.....	190	625
Loup.....	122	479
Madison.....	22,026	844
McPherson.....	72	636
Merrick.....	2,313	838
Morrill.....	1,521	770
Nance.....	1,003	710
Nemaha.....	2,919	1,061
Nuckolls.....	1,489	692
Otoe.....	6,056	777
Pawnee.....	744	753
Perkins.....	1,154	885
Phelps.....	4,695	897
Pierce.....	1,953	784
Platte.....	19,179	892
Polk.....	1,471	753
Red Willow.....	5,072	731
Richardson.....	2,593	692
Rock.....	491	711
Saline.....	7,126	847
Sarpy.....	73,215	933
Saunders.....	5,349	752
Scotts Bluff.....	16,450	799
Seward.....	6,027	873
Sheridan.....	1,755	663
Sherman.....	809	613
Sioux.....	156	693
Stanton.....	1,354	1,330
Thayer.....	2,362	791
Thomas.....	257	636
Thurston.....	2,975	905
Valley.....	1,770	741
Washington.....	7,802	1,168
Wayne.....	4,261	725
Webster.....	1,031	654
Wheeler.....	313	752
York.....	7,565	842

Footnotes

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

NOTE: Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, fourth quarter 2018

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2018 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2017-18	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2017-18	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	148,061.8	1.5	\$1,144	--	3.2	--
Alabama	1,986.6	1.6	957	36	3.1	33
Alaska	308.3	0.4	1,103	16	4.9	7
Arizona	2,921.1	3.0	1,017	24	4.1	11
Arkansas	1,227.0	0.8	869	50	2.4	43
California	17,556.7	1.7	1,392	4	3.3	26
Colorado	2,713.7	2.2	1,180	10	4.1	11
Connecticut	1,697.9	0.5	1,334	5	1.3	49
Delaware	451.2	1.1	1,107	15	2.4	43
District of Columbia	775.1	0.6	1,943	1	7.3	2
Florida	8,902.7	2.1	1,006	27	3.1	33
Georgia.....	4,499.8	1.8	1,053	21	2.4	43
Hawaii.....	669.3	0.6	1,016	25	3.3	26
Idaho	734.4	3.2	890	47	3.6	20
Illinois	6,026.0	0.3	1,189	9	3.3	26
Indiana.....	3,086.2	0.9	941	38	2.8	37
Iowa	1,558.4	0.5	966	35	3.0	35
Kansas	1,402.2	0.8	927	41	3.7	18
Kentucky.....	1,914.0	0.3	924	42	3.2	30
Louisiana	1,934.1	0.7	968	34	3.8	15
Maine.....	618.4	1.3	906	44	2.5	41
Maryland.....	2,702.5	0.8	1,228	8	1.7	48
Massachusetts	3,620.3	1.0	1,457	2	3.3	26
Michigan	4,366.5	1.0	1,077	19	1.3	49
Minnesota.....	2,902.3	0.9	1,140	14	3.6	20
Mississippi.....	1,144.3	0.2	793	51	2.5	41
Missouri	2,821.3	0.5	980	31	3.6	20
Montana	468.8	1.6	888	48	5.2	5
Nebraska	983.0	0.2	930	40	3.2	30
Nevada	1,397.4	3.3	1,006	27	5.3	4
New Hampshire.....	666.0	0.7	1,158	12	2.3	46
New Jersey.....	4,125.6	0.8	1,298	6	2.7	38
New Mexico	830.2	1.5	905	45	4.6	9
New York	9,613.2	1.5	1,445	3	1.0	51
North Carolina	4,458.9	1.6	1,013	26	5.1	6
North Dakota	422.3	1.5	1,057	20	4.7	8
Ohio	5,442.9	0.5	1,006	27	3.4	24
Oklahoma	1,632.3	1.5	932	39	4.1	11
Oregon	1,935.8	1.7	1,052	22	3.7	18
Pennsylvania	5,932.5	1.0	1,103	16	2.6	39
Rhode Island	487.2	0.8	1,085	18	2.6	39
South Carolina.....	2,119.6	2.8	893	46	1.9	47
South Dakota.....	428.4	1.2	885	49	3.4	24
Tennessee	3,039.8	1.8	1,030	23	3.0	35
Texas	12,531.7	2.5	1,148	13	3.5	23
Utah	1,511.5	3.2	972	33	3.8	15
Vermont.....	314.2	-0.4	954	37	3.2	30
Virginia.....	3,927.2	1.1	1,164	11	3.8	15
Washington.....	3,384.2	2.4	1,292	7	6.3	3
West Virginia	704.2	1.5	917	43	8.3	1
Wisconsin	2,892.3	0.6	989	30	4.0	14
Wyoming	272.1	1.8	978	32	4.4	10
Puerto Rico.....	896.4	0.8	576	(3)	0.9	(3)
Virgin Islands.....	34.5	0.5	925	(3)	2.3	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

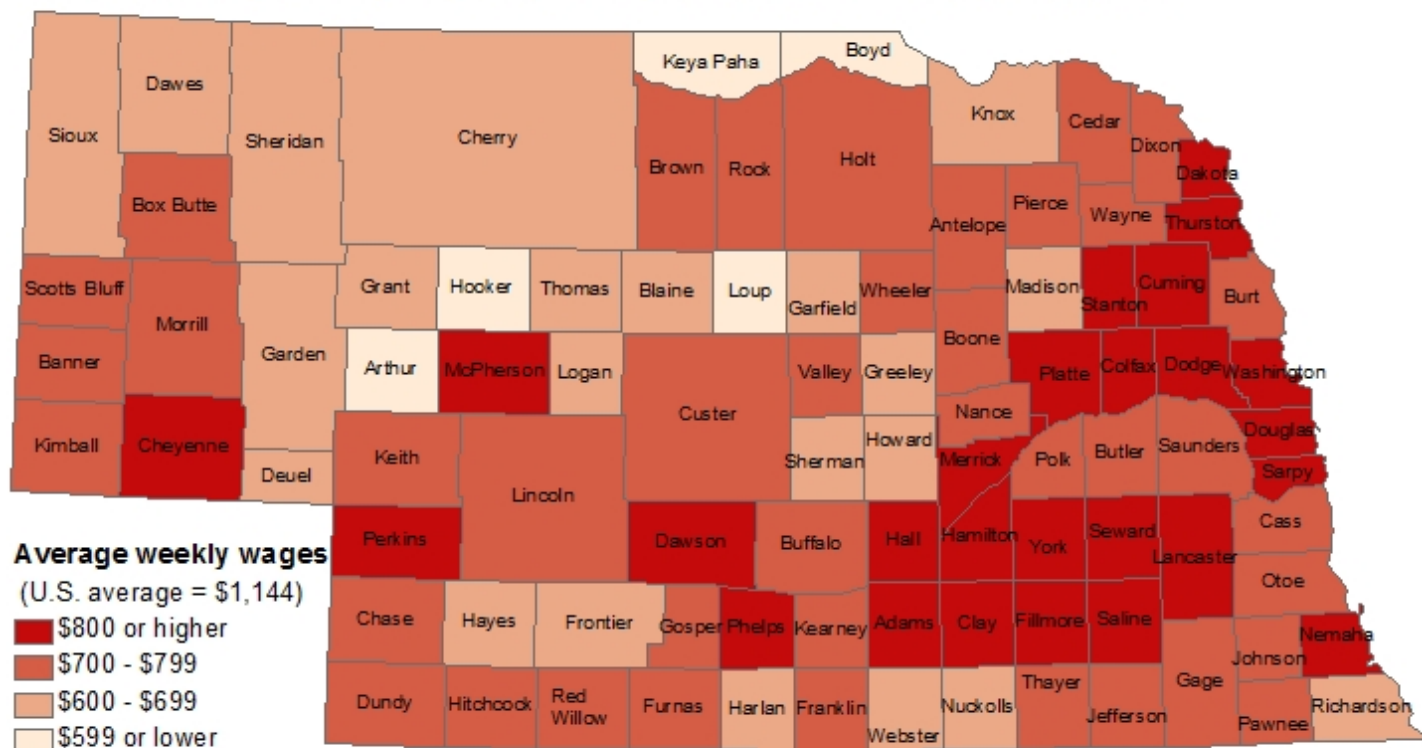
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(3) Data not included in the national ranking.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in Nebraska, fourth quarter 2018



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.